

## Sizing Up the Competition by greyskygirl, wreckingthefinite

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** Belly Kink, Chubby Jim Hopper, F/M, Light Angst, Masturbation, Pining, Stuffing, Weight Gain, Weight Issues, but yall know these two crazy kids end up together right?, look this is sad, right - Freeform, sad and lonely jerk off sessions

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**Summary:**

In which Hopper pines for Joyce, eats his feelings, and in general is the thick and angsty mess of all of our dreams. (Or: what really happened between S1 and S2, and how Jim Hopper got so goddamned beefy.)

## Sizing Up the Competition

### Author's Note:

- For [superstringtheory](#).

Happy birthday to our beloved superstringtheory, who deserves all of the very best things—including a very large, sad, stuffed Hopper on her special day. We love you, dear!

“You ought to get yourself a woman who’ll cook for you,” Patty says, handing Hopper a plastic bag of Styrofoam containers. She taps at the cash register for a second, ringing him up for a single order of the Wednesday special—chicken and noodles. Hopper knows from experience that there are actually two orders in the package, as well as an enormous slice of pie and a little paper-wrapped package of yeast rolls.

“Why would I do that when I’ve got you, honey?”

Patty grins at him, snapping her Wrigley’s and bracing a hand on her bony hip. “If I were twenty years younger, Sheriff—oh, look out, darlin’.”

“Keep the change, gorgeous,” Hopper says, winking as he heads for the door. It’s a comforting exchange, between him and Patty. She never pushes too much, never asks why he takes his lunch to go instead of sitting down at the counter and yukking it up with the regulars. And she always, always gives him a double order.

Which is probably why he can barely fasten his uniform slacks these days, and why he’s taken to wearing his jacket even when he’s in the station. It’s too hot, but at least it hides the way the buttons on his shirt pucker and gap across the widest part of his belly—and it’s undeniably a belly now. Not just a little softness at his waist, a few extra pounds above his belt. It’s a potbelly, round and insistent and heavy.

He should probably do something about it. Quit gorging himself on

comfort food from the diner, on endless drive thru burgers or TV dinners with El. At the very least, he should admit he's getting fat and order a new fucking uniform.

But not today. Today he just drives out of Hawkins, past fields and farms, until he angles the Bronco into an old farm lane. It's no longer in use, just a couple of old tire tracks in the dirt. The perfect place to eat lunch—if you want to eat far too much food in complete isolation, which is exactly what Hopper wants.

Goddamnit.

He knows he needs to get his shit together. He knows he needs to quit stomping around, oscillating between pissed and sad, between scowling at everyone in the station and locking himself in his cabin with El—who is another problem altogether, and one he should probably be trying to address instead of just...well, hiding in a cabin.

But not today. Today he's going to eat two enormous containers of chicken and noodles, the perfect hand-rolled ones that Patty makes herself, bless her flirtatious old soul, and an enormous slice of her pecan caramel pie, and then he's going to unbutton his slacks so that he can take a full breath.

And he's definitely not going to think about Joyce. Joyce, who seems to play on an endless loop in his mind. Joyce, who had felt so tiny and fragile in his arms but is actually made of steel, who is braver than anyone Hopper knows. Joyce, who smokes too much and whose eyes are still haunted and who would, he's pretty sure, understand exactly why he's drinking too much or eating too much or sleeping too much.

Joyce, who is currently dating Bob fucking Newby.

He eats the last of the yeast rolls out of spite, even though his stomach aches with each miserable bite.

\*

It turns him inside out, a little, watching Joyce with Bob. Seeing that smile turned on someone else, the light in her eyes that someone else

is putting there. But he's not thinking about that, not even as he drives the Bronco past them walking hand-in-hand down the street, and not as he parks by the bakery to grab a dozen donuts.

For the station.

He's telling himself that even as the cheerful girl behind the counter adds an assortment of his favorites to the box, including four of the cream-filled, thickly iced monstrosities that are probably still sitting in his stomach from yesterday's indulgence. (Another donut run. Also for the station.) Three of the dozen disappear during the three-block drive, and when he walks into the station and plops the box down, Flo raises one eyebrow before opening the box.

"Nice round number, nine," she says, and the sarcasm is as thick as the frame of her oversized glasses.

He ignores her and walks into his office, and before he can kick the door shut, Flo's voice floats in. "Left you something on your chair."

The door shuts with a thud, and Hopper eyes his chair for a second, hands on his hips where his uniform pants are digging into his sides. Looks like the problem hasn't gone unnoticed, because piled on his chair in neat folds of fabric is a new uniform. A bigger uniform. The shirt's a size up; the pants, two. So maybe it's a good thing that guilt is an emotion Jim Hopper firmly refuses to associate with the size of his gut.

He shrugs into the new shirt, and the buttons close, but in a way that makes him think this might not be the last uniform delivery on his chair, if he keeps going this way. And why wouldn't he? No one's concerned. He's not hurting anyone, except maybe himself, but if a man wants to sit in his car, or his office, or his house, and eat until it actually hurts, well. He's known worse pain.

Flo hands him apples, and El just stares in her curious, overly blunt way, but no one actually says anything about his excess. Least of all Joyce, when they meet up to take Will to Hawkins Lab for the white-coated weirdos to check him out. When they talk, it's about Will and only Will. Some small talk, maybe.

But he's seen her eyes skitter from the softness of his chin down to the swell of his stomach, and he's weirdly tempted to stick his belly out a little further when she's watching. After all, he's seen Bob Newby, and sculpted abdominals are definitely not a requirement for being Joyce Byers' man. Still, it's not a competition, and he knows it's not—or if it is, he's already lost.

Hopper fastens his new pants and heads back to the donut box. After all, he's got room.

\*

It's late, and Hopper shouldn't be awake. El had gone to bed hours ago. He can't sleep, though, despite the five empty beer cans perched neatly beside his bed, despite the mostly-full package of Oreos he'd eaten mindlessly. He'd dunked each cookie carefully into a jar of peanut butter before he'd eaten it, working through them without even realizing what he was doing.

He's miserable now, gut painfully distended with junk food and beer, head bleary from alcohol but still wide awake.

*Your problem is you make bad choices*, he tells himself, a bit of internalized wisdom that could apply to pretty much any aspect of his life. Keeping a little girl with superpowers hidden in his cabin. Drinking too much on a weeknight. Eating until his belly aches and gurgles, stuffing himself to the point of discomfort so often that he's up two pants sizes and probably working on a third. Not telling Joyce all the things he should have told her months ago, when she might have been receptive to it.

He glances down at the bloated curve of his belly, the way his undershirt clings so tightly to it that he can see the indentation of his navel, can feel where the shirt has ridden up to expose an inch or two of flab folding over the waistband of his briefs.

He should be disgusted with himself.

And he is, for lots of reasons—but maybe not for this. He runs a hand experimentally over his gut, from the taut bloat at the top of his abdomen to the embarrassingly soft pudge of his lower belly.

Christ, he's getting fat. And his belly's only the beginning. That doesn't even take into consideration the pudge clinging to his upper arms, or the thick roll of fat that rests above his hips and curves around his lower back, or the way he finds himself walking with his legs spread a little wider than usual to accommodate his thicker thighs.

Images of Joyce spring to his mind, no matter how much he tries to ignore them, to will them away. What would she think of him, of his swollen, achy belly that he can't even suck in anymore, that is just *there*, a shameless potbelly that everyone can see? What would she *say*? Has she already noticed, even? His jacket only hides so much—and nothing hides the way his chin doubles now.

His hand slips lower, beneath his waistband, and he's gripping his cock as mindlessly as he'd eaten the Oreos—like his body seeks out pleasure with his brain on autopilot, an optional participant.

Except his brain is pretty fully invested in this, he realizes, as Joyce continues to play on a loop through his mind. Joyce handing him a plate—"get yourself a woman who'll cook for you," Patty's words at the diner echo through his foggy brain—Joyce in her kitchen, Joyce reaching out and poking the widest, roundest part of his belly, where it still threatens to spill out between the buttons of his new shirts. Joyce scolding him about how—fuck, Jesus, fuck—*fat* he's getting.

*What's all this, Hop?* Her hands squeezing, maybe just shy of painful. *Look at at all this belly—*

Hopper tenses as he comes, aware with sudden, aching clarity how full his gut is, coming that much harder when he realizes how stuffed he is.

It takes a minute for him to catch his breath, the afterglow of his orgasm slowly receding, leaving him alone in his crappy bed, fat and overfull and half-drunk, jerking off about his high school sweetheart poking him in the belly.

*Get your fucking shit together. Christ.*

He wakes up in what's becoming his usual manner: alone, hungry and a little hungover, and it annoys him. He eats enough that he shouldn't *be* hungry, and he drinks enough that he shouldn't be feeling it, but here he is, sprawled in his bed, gut and head (and maybe his heart) aching.

He's a fucking mess.

El's at the table already when he wanders out of his room, and now he's self-conscious enough to tug his too-tight shirt down over his belly.

"Hey, kid," he offers as a greeting, and then he's heading immediately to the freezer, pulling out a familiar yellow box to get their Saturday morning started off right.

With enough sugary calories to take away some of the emptiness he's feeling, that is. Saturdays are triple-decker Eggo extravaganza days. It started out night as an apology, and the joy in El's wide eyes encouraged him to add a third layer and then haul out the whipped cream.

She's a kid who's never gotten to be a kid, so he feels no guilt about indulging her like this. Seeing her smile is worth any damage he's doing to her teeth, and it's fairly obvious he's past caring about the damage to his own waistline.

Three Eggos later, he's ready to start the day for real, run some errands. He's got to restock their frozen waffle supply, for one, and he's on a 19-day streak of lunch specials at the diner. It's no white picket fence kind of life, but he's playing the shitty hand Hawkins and life have dealt him. There's a whole day ahead of him, and he's almost smiling as he slides into the Bronco and his belly brushes against the wheel.

He's still almost smiling as he makes his way out of the grocery, Eggo-laden plastic bag swinging jauntily from his fingertips. And then someone steps in front of him on the sidewalk, and for a second, he thinks maybe he's imagining her.

Usually when he sees things, he sees Sara. Joyce would be new.

But the triple decker extravaganza's sitting heavy in his stomach, and Joyce is standing in front of him, with her head tilted sideways. This is real.

"Hopper, hi," she says, and her pretty brown eyes are the color of the Hershey's kisses he'd sprinkled all over his waffles. And if that isn't an indication of how fucked up he is, the constant Joyce-sex-food beat of his thoughts, well.

"You're out early for a Saturday," Joyce points out, and he stands a little taller at the thought that she knows his schedule, that she cares enough to mark his routine. It takes him a minute to notice that he's pushing out his belly as he stands there, like he's waiting for her to notice the way she does in his head.

"Ah, just stocking up." He lifts up the bag, boxes of waffles and cigarettes the only things inside, and shrugs.

"Breakfast of champions."

"Yeah, well ..." he scratches a hand through his hair to keep it from drifting to his stomach. "I figure nobody's gonna mistake me for a Wheaties man."

And Joyce laughs. Just for a minute, she's not haunted and he's not hiding, and they smile at each other. Then life in Hawkins reverts to normal, and Bob Newby slides a pudgy arm around Joyce's waist.

"Morning, Jim, isn't it a beautiful day?" He squeezes Joyce's side, and now her smile is for Bob as she curls her slight body into his.

"Peachy," Hopper says flatly, taking the hand Bob offers. "You crazy kids go have a beautiful day together, and I'm gonna get on with mine."

"Bye, Hop," Joyce calls as he opens the door of the Bronco.

He gets three meatloaf specials at the diner and squeals his tires as a little as he makes the turn onto the farm lane. Fifteen minutes later, he's dragging a finger through the gravy pooling in the last container and undoing the button on his jeans.



Just another day in Hawkins.

**Author's Note:**

Come hang out with us on tumblr--we're [missjanedoeeyes](#) and [whowaswillbe](#)). We would absolutely love to scream about thick Jim Hopper with you.

And, as always, we will savor your comments like a fine wine.